

## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC

### PARTISIPASI POLITIK DI MASA PANDEMI COVID

Diyas Widiyarti <sup>1a</sup>, Heri Sunaryanto <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Sains Komunikasi, Universitas Bengkulu

<sup>a</sup>Correspondence: Diyas Widiyarti, E-mail: diyas.widiyarti@unib.ac.id

(Incoming: 30-01-2023; Reviewed: 03-02-2023; Accepted: 12-10-2023)

#### ABSTRACT

The aims of this study was to identify and analyze the socio-political factors behind the high voter toward the Election of the Governor and Vice Governor of Bengkulu in 2020. This research was a mixed research between quantitative and qualitative method. Using the purposive sampling technique with informants who represent various elements directly related to the Pilkada (Local District Heads Election) of Governor and Vice Governor which were held simultaneously in Indonesia. on December 9, 2020. Information collection techniques were carried out using Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and in-depth interviews. The results of the study were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman technique by doing reduction, display, and triangulation. The results of the study showed that there were several socio-political factors that had a direct contribution to the high voter toward the Election of the Governor and Vice Governor of Bengkulu Province in 2020 (77.68 percent). These factors were transactional politics (money politics), the role of the media, the role of General Election Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum-KPU*) and General Election Supervisory Agency (*Badan Pengawas Pemilu-Bawaslu*), the role of candidates and the pattern of visiting campaigns. The conclusion of the study is that there is no single factor that dominantly affects voter participation in the Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections. Voter participation is a product of the interdependence of various social and political factors.

Key words: General election, Voter participation, Socio-political determinants.

#### ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis faktor sosial politik yang melatarbelakangi tingginya pemilih pada Pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Bengkulu Tahun 2020. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian campuran antara metode kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Menggunakan teknik purposive sampling dengan informan yang mewakili berbagai elemen yang terkait langsung dengan Pilkada (Pemilihan Bupati) Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur yang dilaksanakan serentak di Indonesia. pada tanggal 9 Desember 2020. Teknik pengumpulan informasi dilakukan dengan Focus Group Discussion (FGD) dan wawancara mendalam. Hasil penelitian dianalisis menggunakan teknik Miles dan Huberman dengan melakukan reduksi, display, dan triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat beberapa faktor sosial politik yang mempunyai kontribusi langsung terhadap tingginya pemilih pada Pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Provinsi Bengkulu Tahun 2020 (77,68 persen). Faktor-faktor tersebut adalah politik transaksional (politik uang), peran media, peran Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU) dan Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum (Bawaslu), peran kandidat dan pola pemilu. kampanye kunjungan. Kesimpulan penelitian adalah tidak ada faktor tunggal yang secara dominan mempengaruhi partisipasi pemilih pada Pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Bengkulu. Partisipasi pemilih merupakan produk saling ketergantungan berbagai faktor sosial dan politik.

Kata kunci: Pemilihan Umum, Partisipasi Pemilih, Faktor Penentu Sosial Politik.

---

Widiyarti & Sunaryanto. (2023). Partisipasi Politik dimasa pandemic Covid. *Jurnal Sosial Humaniora*, 14(2), 143- 161.

---

## INTRODUCTION

Bengkulu Province held the Governor and Vice Governor Elections on December 9, 2020 and were won by the incumbent Dr. Rohidin Mersyah as Governor and Dr. Rosjonsyah as Vice Governor. The Simultaneous Pilkada in December 2020 was a monumental Pilkada (Local District Heads Election) and different from the previous Pilkada (Local District Heads Election) because it was held in the middle of Indonesia being hit by the Covid19 pandemic. Looking closely to the number of people who are positively infected with the Corona19 virus, it is showing a significant increase every day. As reported by the Covid-19 Task Force, up to December 2020 there had been an average of 3,000 people positive for Corona every day. The implementation of regional head elections (*Pilkada*) on 9 December 2020 was a new reality in the history of elections in Indonesia. This elections is different from the previous regional head elections (*Pilkada*) because it was held when Indonesia was being hit by the massive Covid-19 pandemic. Through Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2020 concerning Regional Head Elections the government has determined that the *Pilkada* must be carried out even though it had caused controversy between state institutions and interest groups in the public sphere, there were those who agreed and refused with different arguments. In the end, the government, with various considerations, has decided that the 2020 the *Pilkada* will be held on December 9, 2020.

*Pilkada* in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic is certainly a challenge and a new experience for the government, election organizers (*KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP*), election participants (Political Parties supporting Candidate Pairs for Governor, Regent/Mayor), as well as the voting public. The pessimistic parties launched criticism because the

implementation was considered forced at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic was showing an increasing trend. Many potential problems can arise, not only related to public health, but also related to the democratic process of the *Pilkada* itself which can have an impact on the quality of the *Pilkada*. Regional elections held in the midst of a pandemic will discourage people from participating. With a low level of participation, the opportunities for manipulation are more open.

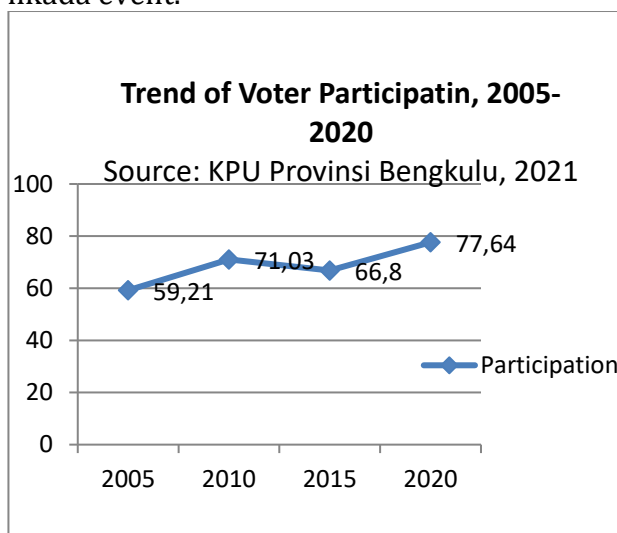
Response the optimists believe that both the government and organizers are assisted by other officials with the support of the community, the *Pilkada* will go well. This nation has gone through an extraordinary democratic process when many parties doubted the implementation of the 2004 direct election. Despite the shortcomings, the 2004 direct election was considered a success. The results of the Kompas Research and Development survey showed that 64.8 percent of the public wanted the *Pilkada* to continue. Several countries hit by the Covid-19 pandemic were able to hold elections despite a decline in participation. Learning from South Korea as the first country in the world doing election in Corona-19 pandemic that elections can still run well, even voter participation increased when South Korea was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic (Spinelli, A and Luke Butcher, 2022).

What many people are worried about is the implementation of the simultaneous regional elections on December 9, 2020, where due to the fear that the people will not be present at the voting places, this is not entirely true, at least for the Governor and Vice Governor Elections in Bengkulu Province. The level of voter participation in the regional elections for the governor and vice governor in Bengkulu Province was recorded as the second highest in Indonesia after North Sulawesi province, namely 77.73%. Meanwhile, voter participation in North Sulawesi reached

78.72%. The voter participation rate in Bengkulu also exceeded the KPU's national target of 77.5%. (*Bengkulu Province KPU, 2021*).

Compared to the voter participation rate in the other Pilkada since 2005, the voter participation rate in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor election is the highest performer of achievement because it is the highest voter participation. In fact, the rate of increase compared to the previous *Pilkada* in 2015 reached 10.93%, an extraordinary increase considering that the 2020 simultaneous regional elections were held when Bengkulu province was facing the Corona-19 pandemic which scared the public.

Observing the trend of voter participation in the Governor and Vice Governor elections since 2005, shows that there have been fluctuations in the level of voter participation from time to time. This shows that there are many factors behind the level of voter participation in each Pilkada event.



Grafik 1. Trend of voter participation

*Pilkada* experts in Indonesia expressed the opinion that there were several factors behind the differences in voter participation between regions, such as geographical factors, weather, socio-economic conditions, culture, organizer integrity, money politics, integrity and popularity of candidates (Diego Fossati, 2016, Usfinit et al, 2014). Furthermore,

Dalton, (2006) explained related to participation theory as explained by what is known as the civic voluntarism model that there are three types that influence political participation in general elections, namely personal characteristics, group effects, and political attitudes.

Personal characteristics (personal characteristics) emphasize the social status held by an individual, for example level of education, occupation, wages and so on. In many political studies the level of education and employment status influences the choice in general elections. Furthermore, the effect of the group (group effects) means that voter participation (voters) is influenced by ties and social interaction with the social group of which he is a part. Social closeness with certain groups or parties will encourage someone to tend to choose their reference group. Meanwhile, political attitudes have more to do with political values that are understood by a person towards a party or candidate participating in an election. Voters' dissatisfaction with the performance of the party or regional head candidate will affect their choice. (Dalton, 2006: 50-51)

This research is important to do to explore the various dominant factors behind the drastic increase in voter participation in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections which were held a few months ago. This issue is interesting to study because this election is different from previous regional elections. The 2020 Pilkada was held simultaneously with 8 surrounding districts of Bengkulu province, which was the first time in the history of regional head elections and was held when Bengkulu province was being hit by the Covid19 pandemic. Furthermore, the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor Elections have also dismissed the concerns of various groups and observers that the voter participation rate will decrease

significantly compared to the previous Pilkada.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Literature Review

As has been explained that there are many factors behind voter participation in general elections or *Pilkada*, this is shown by a fluctuating trend since the 2005 *Pilkada* of Governor and Vice Governor in Bengkulu province. While many people are worry about the low participation of voters in the 2020 simultaneous local elections, the regional elections for the Governor and Vice Governor in Bengkulu Province actually showed a level of voter participation that exceeded the national target. The problem that is the subject of this research is what are the dominant factors that contribute to the high voter participation in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections?. Along with the problems that are the focus of this research study, the research objective formulated is to generally identify and analyze the socio-political factors behind the high voter participation rate in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections in the era of Covid-19 pandemic.

### Political Participation

Political participation is the most important part in the election process (general election) or Regional Head Election (*Pemilu Kepala Daerah-Pilkada*). Without the involvement of the citizen in the election or *Pilkada* process, democracy will lose both its legitimacy and its guiding power. Thomas Jefferson, American president emphasized that "a well informed electorate is the most important constraint on government" (Dalton, 2006: 15). According to Dalton (2006) political participation is the participation of citizens in choosing candidates, campaigns, activities and formal contact with candidates or political parties (directly

contacting officials). In general term, participation is often understood as community involvement in determining the direction of a country's political policies, either directly or indirectly. Political participation is one of the important aspects of democracy because the person who knows best about what is good for himself is the person himself. According to Rahman (2007) political participation is the activity of a person or group of people to participate actively in political life such as selecting state leaders or efforts to influence government policy. In other words, participation can be seen when citizens are involved in general elections using their right to vote or other activities related to election activities. Factors of Political Participation According to Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M (1990), political participation is influenced by the first, local political culture. This is related to several values that are believed by the community such as customary values and traditional values, religion and others. Second, participation is also influenced by social status including education, and social class in society. According to some political experts (Vyrost, 2019, Bimber, 2022) there are several approaches that are often used in classifying several factors that influence political participation, namely:

Structural approach factor, this factor sees voting activities as a product of a broader structural context, such as social structure, party system, general election system, issues and programs offered by each party. The sociological approach factor, this factor tends to place voting activities in relation to the social context. The point is that people tend to give a choice of a party with attention to demographics and socio-economic, gender, regional place, occupation, education, class, income, and religion. The factor of the ecological approach, in this approach only occurs if in an electoral area there are differences in the characteristics

of voters based on territorial units, such as villages, sub-districts, sub-districts and districts. The social psychology approach factor, this factor refers to the voter's perception of existing parties or the voter's emotion towards a particular party. The factor of the rational choice approach sees voting activities as a product of profit and loss calculations, which considers not only the "costs" incurred by choosing a particular party but also other alternatives that could be profitable.

### Methods

This research is a mixed research of quantitative and qualitative method. The data used in this study are primary and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from the field which is the result of in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with selected informants representing elements of society who have a direct relationship with the Governor Election, namely General from the Tabel 01. List Of Research Informants.

Table 1. List of research informants

Informan	Spesifikasi	Amount
Election Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum-KPU)	Chairman and Member	5 Person
General Election Supervisory Agency (Badan Pengawas Pemilu-Bawaslu)	Chairman	3 Person
General Election Organizer Ethics Council (Dewan Kehormatan Penyelenggara Pemilu-DKPP),	Chairmen and Maneger	2 Person
Academic experts	Lecturer Focus Case Politic	1 person
Social observers	Praktisi Focus Case Politic	1 Person
Media	Electronic and Online Publish	More Than One

Primary data is used to deepen the objective facts of the high voter participation obtained from selected informants. Primary data is qualitative information on various social and non-

social factors that are used to provide an explanation for the high participation rate of voters. Other data used is secondary data. Secondary data is data obtained from documentation, publications, and research results issued by general election organizers (KPU, Bawaslu and DKPP) or private organisations. Information collected will be analyzed using the Miles and Huberman technique by doing reduction, display, and triangulation statements from informants are verified with expert opinion and related research results.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The sample used in the research consisted The results of research on the high level of voter participation in the 2020 regional election for the Governor and Vice Governor of Bengkulu Province show that there is no single factor that can explain this phenomenon. Based on the results of interviews with observers, academics and the results of Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with organizers (KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP) there are several factors that contribute to the participation rate for the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor election. And to a certain degree these factors are interrelated one and another. Some of these determinant factors are Transactional Politics (Money Politics), the Role of the Media, both main stream and social media, the Role of Organizers, the Role of Candidates (election participants), and Visiting campaign patterns to voters.

#### Transactional Politics (Money Politics)

The results of interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with informants show that the practice of transactional politics or money politics has occurred in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor election and have contributed to the high voter participation which reached 77.64 percent.

This is the highest achievement in the Regional Elections for the Governor and Vice Governor held in Bengkulu Province since 2005. Money politics is a form of giving or promising to bribe someone either that a voter does not use his right to vote or so that he use his right in a certain way during a general election. Giving can be done using money or goods. Money politics is a form of *Pilkada* violation and seriously tarnish general elections and the development of democracy in Indonesia. The practice of money politics has been going on for a long time and every election and local election is different only in terms of levels.

This problem of money politics during the New Order era with a representation system had disturbed the community so that the government through Law No. 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government which became the normative basis for the implementation of direct regional elections should make the system of government in the regions more democratic because the people could determine who the candidates should be elected. On the basis of this law starting in 2005, in June 2005 to be precise, the election of regional heads has been carried out directly in Indonesia. Direct local elections are also expected to minimize the practice of money politics. However, with the current direct election system, it is even more widespread practice of money politic because the subjects and objects as targets are increasingly broad and varied. In reality, even though money politics can be seen and felt, it is difficult to process. As stated by several informants, the facts on the ground show the strong practice of money politics in the election of governor and vice governor in 2020. One of informants from university expert explained that :

“It can be seen and felt by the people who are wrapped up in social activities such as social gatherings, women housewife activities, mutual activities

cleaning the village (gotongroyong), etc., and religious events”.

It seems that transactional politics is not a taboo subject for the people, even its presence is expected many people. The momentum of the regional elections is actually considered a blessing by the people with the assumption that when else people can enjoy the candidates money if not at an event like this. Don't expect to get a share if they've been elected. Usually they forget about political promises during the campaign period. All candidates practice money politics to win this contest. This practice causes the money politics to be considered a powerful way to gain voters' votes which directly also encourages voters to come to voting place (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara-TPS*).

Even so, it is not easy to be legally processed because the practice of money politics takes place in a dark room on the backstage not frontstage, following Erving Gofman's explanation in his Dramaturgy theory. Money politics is generally carried out by sympathizers, cadres or even political party officials ahead approaching election day. While the subjects can be political parties as supporter, community organizations, social media, non-governmental organizations, interest groups and the public as voters. The practice of money politics is carried out by giving donations in the form of money, funeral money, transportation money, groceries including rice, oil and sugar to the public with the aim of attracting public sympathy so that they can vote for the party or candidates concerned. As explained by informant from university and research expert that:

“One of money politic or political transactional is shown by example, when voting day was approaching, many students deliberately went home to vote because there were envelopes containing money in the village and information from the community that many candidates had

distributed envelopes. The rates range from 300 to 500 thousand Rupiah as some informants said.”

What is the guarantee that they must vote for the candidate who gave the money? It is true that there is no guarantee that money politics automatically guarantees that the recipient will vote. There are several factors associated with the matter of money politics. They are actually classified as traditional voters who are smart in the context of addressing money politics. For the city it may be different, considering that the majority of voters in the city are more critical/traditional voters because they are more educated and have middle to upper social status. However, voters in rural areas with low levels of education and political understanding, and the building of traditional social relations, the practice of money politics is more possible by associating it with social ties based on *primordialism* (relationship based on kinship, region, ethnicity and social closeness) (Teka, 2020) Besides that, the givers in the field are also people who primordially have a close relationship and are people who have social status in the village. Therefore, the recipients are socially and emotionally bound to the candidates who give and this is directly confirmed by the voting results.

As explained by one of the informants from election observer: “...that from the results of research conducted by the SMRC (Syaiful Mujani Research Center) in Bengkulu that money politics is highest in Semaku (South Bengkulu regency, Kaur and Seluma regency). In Kaur, 56 percent of voters will vote if they receive an money. In Seluma regency, the condition is relatively the same, almost 52 percent, while in South Bengkulu regency, money politics reaches above 50 percent. SMRC then concluded that the average transactional practice occurred in the simultaneous 2020 Pilkada and the figure was around 36 percent.”

From this explanation, it can be concluded that there is a close relationship between the practice of money politics and the presence of voters at voting place to carry out their political promises by holding elections to candidates who have contributed to giving envelopes. Directly this kind of voter behavior has contributed to voter participation in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor election in Bengkulu. However, the practice of money politics is very strong in the head of district election (the election of Bupati) which has an impact on participation in the Governor and Vice Governor election because the voters for the district election are also the same voters in the Governor election. Even though their arrival was more due to elect the Bupati, at the voting place they also received ballot papers to elect the Governor and Vice Governor.

### **The Role of the Media**

The high participation of voters in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor election is inseparable from the role of the media which intensively, massively and continuously conducts socialization through reporting and discussion around regional election issues. The commissioner (KPU) is aware of the strategic role of the media so that the commissioner cooperates with various elements/networks with mainstream media such as local televisions and local newspapers such as Rafflesia Bengkulu Television, Bengkulu Express Television and their networks in the regions, youth organizations such as Indonesian Youth National Committee (*Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia-KNPI*, Village Youth Organization (*Karang Taruna*), Student Organization, Social Media Groups which consists of around 200 social media groups, Ambo (WhatsApp Group network from teenagers and YouTubers). Public discussion through social media tools such as WhatsApp is an effective media in building people's emotions to be actively

involved with regional election issues. Devices such as mobile phones are no longer a luxury item in the villages and internet networks have spread widely throughout Bengkulu through several major providers such as *Telkomsel, Mentari and XL* networks which are easily accessible. The excitement of discussing each support for the selected candidate becomes a topic that is able to maintain enthusiasm to always be part of the election event for the Governor and Vice Governor which continues with the proof of each to come to the voting place and execute their choices.

Even, uncontrolled discussions turns into conflicts that "bullying" each other's candidate for support. In the context of mutual support for these candidates, it is also disseminated to the surrounding community so that indirectly they are involved in campaigns to promote their candidates into the surrounding community. This process is even more effective compared to mainstream media report because it is carried out face to face in casual chats at stalls/taverns and community gathering places in hamlets using the local language so that the message is more relevant and clear. The emotion and enthusiasm to prove to each other that their support for the candidates is really not wrong has encouraged them to commit to come and vote at the voting place. It is not surprising that in hamlets far from provincial and district capitals, voter participation in the election of the Governor and Vice Governor showed high enthusiasm.

The incident where one of the prospective candidates was dropped because according to the commissioner (KPU) the candidate did not fulfill one of the mandatory requirements related to punishment time when he release as a recidivist from prison became a huge issue because it caused uproar in the public space. This issue is increasingly bombastic because it has been packaged in such a way

for the interests of the media business concerned. The issue of deleting is also a topic of discussion/chat on social media which is no less exciting. As mentioned by Organizers (*KPU and Bawaslu*) through the result of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and observers from the result of depth interview believed that :

"The positive effects of the case have sparked public emotion and enthusiasm to follow its developments and are able to maintain public enthusiasm to be actively involved in being part of the Governor's election event."

It is clear that the contribution of the media in encouraging high voter participation in the election of the Governor and Vice Governor election is significant. The role of the media was also confirmed by other sources that during the 2020 Governor Election, the media intensively reported and carried out election messages that were quite massive and sustainable.

### **Role of Organizer (Commissioner)**

As the main organizers, both the General Election Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum-KPU*) and Election Supervisory Body (*Badan Pengawas Pemilu-Bawaslu*) always try to carry out the election for the Governor and Vice Governor to run smoothly without any problems in accordance with the principles and fundamental principles of the Election and of course, to be able to realize the highest possible voter participation. Participation is the main parameter in every election event. It is well known that the level of success of an election is determined by how high the voter participation is generated. The high participation of voters in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Election cannot be separated from the performance and role of the organizers (KPU and Bawaslu of Bengkulu Province). In the simultaneous of local election on December 9, 2020, the national



commissioner has set a voter participation target around 75 percent. Considering the Covid-19 pandemic, which was criticized by observers and academics, it would have an impact on low voter participation, of course, the target of 75 percent voter participation is not an easy one to be achieved. The commission (*KPU* and *Bawaslu*) must work extra hard without having to violate the rules for holding simultaneous local elections during the Covid-19 pandemic as stipulated in Regulation Number 06 of 2020 concerning the Election of Governors and Vice Governors, Regents (*Bupati*) and Vice Regents (*Wakil Bupati*), and/or City Mayors (*Walikota*) and Vice City Mayors (*Wakil Walikota*) Simultaneous. In the context of efforts to achieve the target of 75 percent voter participation, the commissioner (*KPU*) has made several strategic efforts such as establishing cooperation with the media, carefully arranging of the voting place and the facilities that must be provided, arranging voting schedules for each voter and cleaning voter data.

As previously explained, the commissioner of Bengkulu Province has developed a network with both local mainstream media and local community social media networks (*WhatsApp* groups and *Youtubers*). This collaboration has been able to reach a wide range of voters in the majority of the Bengkulu region. Local election messages, issues that are currently developing, as well as issues related to health protocols, have been able to increase public knowledge related to the Governor election and foster a sense of security for voters not to be afraid to come to voting place to vote. The commissioner has prepared all the infrastructure and facilities that can confidently avoid exposure to the Covid-19 virus at the voting place. It turned out that the commissioner's messages were heard and understood by voters, thus encouraging voters to come to the voting place. In accordance with commissioner regulation

number 06 of 2020 concerning Implementation of Elections for the Governor and Vice Governor, Regent and Vice Regent, and/or Mayor and Vice Mayor Simultaneously, the commissioner of Bengkulu Province has regulated the maximum number of voters in each voting place, namely a maximum of 500 voters. This provision is different from the maximum number of voters at each voting place under normal conditions is 800 voters. This arrangement is related to preventing crowds at voting place that will violate the Health Protocol.

At each voting place, a SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) has been established as stipulated in the Health Protocol. The Commissioner provides facilities related to the Protocol, namely providing masks, arranging seats for both voters and voting officers, a place to wash hands and gloves for voting, and a booth to check voters who enter the voting place area. By implementing these SOPs what the community is worried about will not happen. This means that voting place will not become a new cluster of exposure to the Corona-19 virus in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor Elections.

The fact that facilities are available according to the Health Protocol is also a factor that encourages people to have the courage to come to voting place. As is the tradition of distributing face-to-face information in villages in Bengkulu, voters who have voted at the voting place inform neighbors and relatives they meet that voting place is safe because the facilities for preventing exposure to the Covid-19 virus are fully available. As said by the commissioner in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) that :

“There is a tradition in the village of inviting neighbors to come to the voting place together. This tradition is not found in Bengkulu City”.

The village community in Bengkulu is a traditional society where their social relations are built on emotional ties or

affection. Feeling one village and one resident greeting and helping each other is a characteristic that is inherent to everyone in everyday life. This social reality is in accordance with what sociologists say that social interactions of traditional community are mechanical and based on emotional ties or affection (Ritzer, 2003; Poloma 1984).

In order to obtain real voter participation figures, the commissioner of Bengkulu Province has made serious efforts related to data cleaning. The problem of real voter data has always been an issue that has never faded since the direct elections were held in 2004. The problem in Bengkulu related to voter data was the impact of the development of a new district in 2003. As it is known that one of the requirements for the expansion of a new district is a minimum population of 100 thousand related to the minimum requirement of 20 seats in the District House of Representatives.

In reality, there are several regencies whose *de facto* population has not yet reached 100 thousand people, then *de jure* it is written as more than 100 thousand people. This data mark up has an impact on the real number of voters because the voter data are data by name and by address. As a result, at the start of the 2003 direct elections, election monitors such as the JPPR (People's Election Monitoring Network) found up to 30 people with the same name and address.

From the beginning, the data agreed to be used to determine the Final Voter List are data from the Department of Population and Civil Registration Office (*Kantor Kependudukan dan Catatan Sipil-Dukcapil*), considering that the data is relatively up to date and close to reality compared to the projected data from BPS. Data from Population and Civil Registration Office has a weakness because the method used is population registration. In the field, registration data, because of its *de jure* nature, sometimes does not match

the real facts. This happens because the data from Population and Civil Registration Office are sensitive to birth data which has the impact of increasing the population because every born baby requires a birth certificate issued from the Population and Civil Registration Office. However, for data on deaths and population movements, the data from Population and Civil Registration Office is allegedly less sensitive because deaths and movements are not reported to the data from Population and Civil Registration Office for many cases. The impact is that the data from Population and Civil Registration Office tends to increase which will certainly have an impact on the Final Voters List (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap-DPT*).

With the slogan that "the commissioner protects citizens' suffrage", the commissioner conducted systematic and procedural steps as mentioned by Commissioner in Focus Group Discussion forum.

"..that through officers in the villages, the Commissioner have done door-to-door visiting by matching and confirming to verify voter data which is administratively obtained from the results of an agreement between the commissioner and Population and Civil Registration Office using a sampling technique."

In the 2019 Legislative Election the number of permanent voters reached 1,382,760 voters and after data cleaning by removing data such as members of the Indonesian Army and voters who were *de facto* found fake names and addresses, registered voters who had died resulted in a fixed number of voters in the 2020 simultaneous local elections becomes 1,374,430 voters.

This means that there are 8,330 voters who were dropped (crossed out) from the voter list in the 2019 Legislative Election. This new data will of course reduce the divisor to produce participation figures. The increase in voter participation in the

2020 election compared to the participation rate in the Legislative Elections is partly due to the larger number of voters so that the divider is also large. The cleaning of voter data by the *KPU and Bawaslu* is believed to be one of the factors contributing to the increase in voter participation reaching 77.64 percent which exceeds the national commission target in the 2020 simultaneous regional elections. The commissioner (*KPU and Bawaslu*) said that :

“The cleaning of voter data must still be carried out until the voter data really corresponds to reality on the one hand and efforts to obtain realistic participation figures on the other hand”.

### **Role of the Candidate**

The high participation rate in the Governor and Vice Governor Election cannot be separated from the influence of the figures of the candidates for Governor and Vice Governor. The composition of the pairs of candidates for Governor and Vice Governor who took part in the 2020 Governor Election contestation represented both ethnicity, regionalism and the track record of Bengkulu community figures and became a strong magnet in encouraging voters to participate in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor Election. The couple of Rohidin Mersyah and Rosjonsyah represent the *Seraway* and *Rejang* ethnicities and both were active officials at the time of running for the Governor and Vice Governor of Bengkulu contestation. Rohidin Mersyah is the candidate for the incumbent governor and Rosjonsah is the regent of Lebong district. The couple of Helmi Hasan and Muslihan DS represent immigrants/newcomers in Bengkulu. AS well known that more than 50 percent of Bengkulu population are migrants. Helmi Hasan is the active City Mayor for two terms and Muslihan DS is the former regent of North Bengkulu. Meanwhile, the couple of Agusrin Najamudin and Imro

Rosyadi represented the *Srawey* and *Rejang* ethnicities. Both are former public officials. Agusrin Najamudin, former Governor of Bengkulu and Imron Rosyadi, former Regent of North Bengkulu

The high voter participation rate in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections was also the impact of figures in the *Bupati* election (regional election in subdistrict level), even according to several informants that:

“This magnetic figure exceeded that of political education carried out by parties or the government”.

Figures in the election of the regional election actually have a high emotional closeness with the voters because they are emotionally better known by the voters than the candidates for Governor Election. This fact is explained from the results of the governor's election where the districts that carry out regional head elections show a higher level of voter participation compared to regions that do not carry out regional head elections. For example, between Bengkulu City and Lebong Regency. The City of Bengkulu that did not carry out local election and whose voter characteristics were more modern, have much lower participation compared to Lebong Regency which held Pilkada (61.86% compared to 89.7%). Primordial ties based on ethnicity and person may be due to the characteristics of voters who are still traditional in Bengkulu province. Sociologically, the majority of Bengkulu people live in rural areas, which is reflected in more than 70 percent of the population working in the agricultural sector (BPS, 2022). In traditional societies, social relations are built on affective or emotional ties. Relations between voters and candidates are based more on a sense of social and cultural closeness. Consequently, voters support candidates based more on primordial ties and subjective rational than on objective rational and interest considerations.

Mobilization by the candidates in regional head elections in the district by the candidates and the winning team encourages voter participation to come to voting place. This condition, according to the informants indicated that

“Candidates were afraid that the voters would not vote due to the Corona-19 pandemic and the intense competition between candidates to win votes to a certain degree, the winning team picks up voters from the gardens and takes them to the voting place to use their rights to vote”.

It is well known, gardening is the occupation of the majority of the population in villages in Bengkulu. The distance between the garden where they work and the house where they live is usually quite far so they need facilities to be able to come to the polling station. From this explanation, it cannot be denied that the closeness of the candidate to the voters from the primordial side is a factor that contributes convincingly to the high participation of voters in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections.

### **Pattern of Visiting Campaign**

Changing the pattern of the campaign as an effort to comply with the Health Protocol from the model of a mass mobilization campaign to a campaign pattern with visits to places determined by the commissioner (*KPU*). According to academics,

“It was clear that the campaign pattern of direct visits to determined places was more effective and became one of the triggers for voter participation. As explained by one of the informants from the academic community, the characteristics of voters in Bengkulu can be categorized at least as follows. First, pragmatic voters, namely voters who do not care about the candidate, the important thing is what benefits he gets from the candidate. Second, critical/rational voters are those who determine their choice by looking at a track record, character of candidates and

experience in bureaucratic/management matters. Voters like this are usually voters with higher educational backgrounds and from the upper middle class. While the third is traditional voters. Traditional voters in making their choices are strongly influenced by primordial ties such as social closeness, kinship, religion and ethnicity. In Bengkulu, the majority of voters are more likely to be characterized as traditional voters. As it is known that the majority of the population of Bengkulu live in rural areas. Traditional voters tend to prioritize face-to-face or cultural-based direct communication such as friendship rather than through electronic media, printed posters, billboards, leaflets or social media. Visiting and meeting face-to-face even if just saying "hello" has more meaning for them than through media such as TV.

The campaign model is limited in which the number of participants is no more than 50 people and the points determined by the commissioner (*KPU*) as the implementation of regulation number 06 of 2020 has forced candidates and campaign teams to critically and strategically manage this face-to-face strategy. Candidates must allocate time to visit more places. The Rohidin Mersyah and Helmi Hasan couples schedule up to 7-8 places in one day. This is very possible because the candidate only takes 10-15 minutes. The candidates for the *Bupati* election did the same thing. With the character of the majority of voters being traditional voters, this new campaign model is actually a blessing in disguise for organizers (General Election Commission). Campaigns with visits to the voting public have been able to foster emotional bonds between candidates and voters and become a motivating factor for them to come to voting places. As mentioned by Dalton (2006) with Civic Voluntary Model. According to the explanation of informants from academic elements, he believes that: “The campaign model by visiting

consistently at these places is a major contributing factor to the high voter participation rate in the 2020 regional elections for the governor and Vice governor.”

## Discussion

The implementation of regional head elections (*Pilkada*) on 9 December 2020 is a new reality in the history of elections in Indonesia. The *Pilkada* which will be held in 2020 is different from the previous regional elections because it was held when Indonesia was being hit by the massive Covid-19 pandemic. Through Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2020 concerning Regional Head Elections, the government has determined that *Pilkada* must be carried out even though it had caused controversy between state institutions and interest groups in the public sphere. There were those who agreed and refused with various arguments. In the end, the government, with various considerations, has decided that the 2020 *Pilkada* will be held on December 9, 2020. Legally, the *Pilkada* in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic already has a strong legal basis, namely Regulation number 02 of 2020. This means that the *Pilkada* is not merely the will of General Election Commission (KPU) as organizers but the mandate of the regulation.

*Pilkada* in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic is certainly a challenge and a new experience for the government, election organizers (KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP), election participants (Political Parties supporting and Candidate Governor and Vice Governor), as well as the voting public. Pessimistic parties launched criticism because the implementation was considered as a forced at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic was showing an increasing trend. Many potential problems can arise, not only related to public health, but also related to the democratic process of the

*Pilkada* itself which can have an impact on the quality of the *Pilkada*. Moreover, regional elections held in the midst of a pandemic will discourage people from participating. With a low level of participation, the opportunities for manipulation are more open.

While the optimists believe that both the government and organizers are assisted by other officials with the support of the community, the *Pilkada* will go well. This nation has gone through an extraordinary democratic process when many parties doubted the implementation of the 2004 direct election. Despite the shortcomings, the 2004 direct election was considered a success. The results of the Kompas Research and Development survey showed that 64.8 percent of the public wanted the *Pilkada* to continue. Several countries hit by the Covid-19 pandemic were able to hold elections despite a decline in participation. Learning from South Korea that elections can still run well, even voter participation increased when South Korea was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recently, there have been concerns from various government circles and community interest groups along with the easing of the PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions), which has resulted in a significant increase in people infected with the Corona19 virus by proposing a postponement and review of the *Pilkada* in the red zone area. This is very understandable considering that there have been many victims, both among the community and health workers.

*Pilkada* during the Covid-19 pandemic must comply with health protocols so that they do not become new clusters. For this purpose, the commissioner (KPU) has issued Regulation number. 6 of 2020 concerning technical guidelines for holding the 2020 *Pilkada* during the Covid-19 pandemic. For organizers as well as participants and the public, this is clearly not easy and in turn it can affect the quality of holding the *Pilkada* this time.

The regional election challenges during the Covid19 pandemic have been responded to by various positive actions by the organizers (KPU) of Bengkulu Province by making the most of what has been regulated by regulation number 6 of 2020 concerning technical guidelines for holding the 2020 Pilkada during the Covid-19 pandemic and the directions that have been carried out by the commissioner in National level. First, the commissioner and all of its staff carried out intensive socialization in collaboration with various other stakeholders (media, NGOs, social organization and community leaders) to explain to the public that *Pilkada* is safe from exposure to Covid-19.

Second, in the field, the commissioner's regulation implementation was carried out by reducing the maximum number of voters at each polling station which resulted in an additional 304 polling stations as previously explained. Third, by setting the voting time and setting voting hours for every voter who will come at the voting place (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara*). This is intended to avoid the accumulation of voters at polling stations which will be prone to becoming a place for Corona exposure. Furthermore, the distance to the *voting* places regulated by limiting seats to comply with the Health Protocol and providing a place to wash hands, masks and thermoguns," explained the commissioners during an FGD (Focus Group Discussion) at the commissioner office in Bengkulu Province.

### **Participants in the Election of the Governor of Bengkulu**

The election for governor and vice governor in Bengkulu was attended by three pairs of candidates and each candidate for governor and vice governor was supported by a coalition of political parties. The first pair is Heli Hasan and Muslihan DS, the second pair is Rohidin Mersyah and Rosjonsyah Syahili, and the

third pair is Agusrin Maryono Najamudin and Imron Rosyadi.

Helmi Hasan is a cadre of the National Mandate Party (*Partai Amanat Nasional*) who was Mayor of Bengkulu for two periods and even still served as Mayor when participating in the 2020 Governor-Vice Governor Election contestation, namely the 2013-2018 and 2018-2023 periods. Meanwhile, his companion was Muslihan DS from the Hanura Party cadre as chairman. The pair Helmi Hasan and Muslihan DS are supported by 3 combined political parties namely the National Democratic Party (NASDEM), Hanura Party, and the National Mandate Party (PAN) which have a total of 10 seats in the House of People's Representatives in Bengkulu Province. While, Rohidin Mersyah is a cadre of the Golongan Karya Party (Golkar) and served as the active Governor of Bengkulu at the time of his candidacy and was partnered with Rosjonsyah Syahili from the cadre of the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan-PDIP (the Struggle of Indonesian Democratic Party) and was an active Lebong Regent at the time of his candidacy. The Rohidin Mersyah and Rosjonsyah pair were supported by 5 coalitions political parties in the the House of People's Representatives in Bengkulu Province namely the PDIP Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan-PDIP), the Golongan Karya Party (Golkar), the Democratic Party (*Partai Demokrat*), the PKS Party (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* - PKS) and PPP Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*-PPP) with a total a total of 26 seats. Whereas Agusrin Najamudin was the former Governor of Bengkulu for 2 periods, 2005-2010 and 2010-2012 (in the second period he was not finished because he was involved in corruption cases) partnered with Imron Rosyadi who was a cadre of the Golongan Karya Party (Golkar) member of the DPR Bengkulu Province who was active during his candidacy. , period 2019-2024. The third pair is supported by 3 coalitions of

political parties in the House of People's Representatives in Bengkulu Province, namely the Gerindra Party (Gerakan Indonesia Raya-Gerinda), PKB Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa-PKB), and Perindo Party (Perserikatan Indonesia-Perindo) which have a total of 12 seats in the House of People's Representatives in Bengkulu Province.

### Voters and Legitimate Votes

During the simultaneous local elections in Bengkulu Province, the population of Bengkulu, according to the results of the 2020 BPS Population Census, was 2,010,670 people in September 2020. Of the total population determined by the commissioner based on an open plenary meeting, there were 1,374,430 voters. In determining the number of voters the commissioner coordinated with the Population and Civil Registration Office of Bengkulu (*Kantor Kependudukan dan Catatan Sipil Province Bengkulu-Dukcapil*). From the results of the determination by the commissioner, the number of permanent voters in Bengkulu City is the largest one, 244,507 voters. Meanwhile, Lebong Regency is the district with the lowest number of voters, namely only 75,280 voters. See Table 02.

Table 2. Number of Voters in the Governor-Vice Governor Election by District, 2020.

No	District	Number
1	Bengkulu City	244,507
2	Central Bengkulu	83,350
3	Kepahiang	107,734
4	Rejang Lebong	193,462
5	Lebong	75,280
6	North Bengkulu	201,218
7	Muko Muko	124,418
8	Seluma	137,919
9	South Bengkulu	117,552
10	Kaur	88,990
	Bengkulu Province	1,374,430

Source: The Commissioner of Bengkulu Province (KPU), 2020

During the implementation of the voting, there is a dynamic in the number of voters where there are voters who are not

registered in the Permanent Voter List (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap*) and voters who make the transfer of votes. There are 15,300 voters who are not registered in the Permanent Voter List but vote using an Electronic KTP or a Certificate that is included in the Supplementary Voters List (*Daftar Pemilih Tambahan-DPTb*). Meanwhile, those who made the transfer voted (Moved Voter List/*Daftar Pemilih Pindahan -DPPH*) of 1,636 voters (General Election Commission, Bengkulu, 2020)

### Valid and Invalid Votes

The data submitted by the General Election Commission of Bengkulu Province relating to voters who use their right to vote are clearly explained in Table 5.1 regarding the number and proportion of voters voting at the voting place (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara-TPS*). Table 02. shows that the proportion of voters who used their right to vote and came to the voting place to vote was 77.64 percent or 1,080,303 voters. This number is relatively higher when compared to the previous Governor-Vice Governor Election in 2015 which reached 66.8 percent. There was a significant increase of 10.8 percent. This percentage is quite extraordinary because the 2020 Regional Head Election (*emilihan Kepala Daerah*) was held during the Covid-19 pandemic which, according to observers and most people, would only reduce voter participation. This achievement has placed the Bengkulu Province regional election participation rate in second place nationally after North Sulawesi province and exceeded the National of General Election Commission's voter participation targeted at 75 percent.

Lebong Regency showed a very high participation rate, namely 89.65 percent, while Bengkulu City showed the lowest participation rate, namely 61.79. This fact is somewhat contradictory to the general pattern of political participation where cities with incidental characteristics are more modern and politically literate in fact

show contradictory facts. According to the results of interviews with the commissioner (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum-KPU*) and Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum-Bawaslu) and observers, this is related to the fact that the City of Bengkulu did not hold local election (*Pilkada*) to elect City Mayors and Vice City Mayors as well as Central Bengkulu Regency which was only 72.91 as the regency with the lowest participation rate. The *Pilkada* factor in the district/regent area seem to significantly influence participation rates. The role of the candidates for Regent-Vice Regent in mobilizing their supporters was identified as a triggering factor.

Tabel 3. Proportion of Voters Using Their Voting Rights by Regency/City, 2020

No	Kab/Kota	Jumlah	Persen
1	Bengkulu City	153,320	61,79
2	Central Bengkulu	60,903	72,91
3	Kepahiang	88,611	80,81
4	Rejang Lebong	150,956	76,82
5	Lebong	68,502	89,65
6	North Bengkulu	156,307	76,87
7	Muko Muko	99,544	78,99
8	Seluma	121,283	87,39
9	South Bengkulu	101,630	85,53
10	Kaur	79,248	87,89
	Bengkulu Province	1,080,303	77,64

Source: The Commissioner of Bengkulu Province (KPU), 2020

Of the total registered voters, 1,374,430 voters, 78.6 percent or 1,080,303 use their right to vote to come to the voting place and vote. While 21.40 percent or 294.127 voters were abstainers as shown in Table 02. There is no explanation for the main reason for the abstainers which are quite high. According to informants in Bengkulu it was more due to technical problems such as being far or difficult to reach the voting place, they were in a garden far from their homes (most of them are farmers). It is well known, the tradition of gardening far from where their live, even across districts, is a tradition and is the main occupation of

the village's population in Bengkulu. It is difficult to explain that the abstentions behavior is motivated by rational considerations of candidates who are considered not as credible as what the abstainers in developed countries (The 100 Million Project, 2020).

Table 3 explains that out of a total of 1,080,303 who used their right to vote and came to the voting place to carry out their voting, 93.93 percent of the votes were declared valid and only 6.07 were declared invalid. Voters generally understand how to vote so that the level of validity is very high. The explanation related to this fact is that they have sufficient experience to vote for the candidate of their choice because the *Pilkada* has been held several times in Bengkulu Province. Perhaps the ones who are at risk of making a mistake in voting are the first-time voters who are generally students. However, there is no need to doubt it considering they are educated voters so they have no difficulty voting. According to the commissioner, the commissioner together with schools and students had have socialized the *Pilkada* by conducting training for selected students who have been capable to communicate election materials that needs to be explained to their friends. The commissioner views the use of students as voter education socialization agents were more strategic in considering that they have emotional closeness and language that is easily understood by their fellow peer groups.

Table 4. Proportion of Valid and Invalid Votes and Abstentions, 2020

NO	Suara Pemilih	Jumlah	Persen
1	Valid Vote	1.014.760	93,93
2	Invalid Vote	65,543	6,07
3	Voter Voting Right	1,080,303	78,60
4	Abstainer	294,127	21,40
5	Registered Voter	1,374,430	



Source: The Commissioner of Bengkulu Province (KPU), 2020

The results of the Bengkulu Province KPU Open Plenary Meeting which was held on Thursday, 18 February 2021 at a Starred Hotel in Bengkulu determined the Governor and Vice Governor candidates Rohidin Mersyah and Rosjonsyah Sahili as the winners in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor Elections. The decision was stated in a Commission Decree of Bengkulu Province Number 291/PL.02.7-BA/17/Prov/II/2021 concerning Determination of the Elected Candidate Pairs for Governor and Vice Governor in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections.

Table 4 explains that the candidate pair for Governor and Vice Governor Rohidin Mersyah and Rosjonsyah Sahili number 2 were declared winners in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor Elections after obtaining valid votes of 418,080 or 41.20 percent and far exceeding the other two candidate pairs, namely the pair candidate for Governor and Vice Governor number 1, the pair Helmi Hasan and Muslihan DS who received 32.36 percent of the votes (328,364 valid votes) and the candidate pair for Governor and Vice Governor number 3, the pair Agusrin Najamudin and Imron Rosyadi who received 26 valid votes .44 percent (268,316 valid votes).

Table 5. Acquisition of Legitimate Votes for Candidate Pairs, 2020

No	Pasangan Calon	Suara Sah	Persen
1	Helmi Hasan dan Muslihan DS	328,364	32,36
2	Rohidin Mersyah dab Rosjonsyah Syahili	418,080	41,20
3	Agusrin Najamudin dan Imron Rosyadi	268,316	26,44
	Total	1,014,760	100

Source: The Commissioner of Bengkulu Province (KPU), 2020

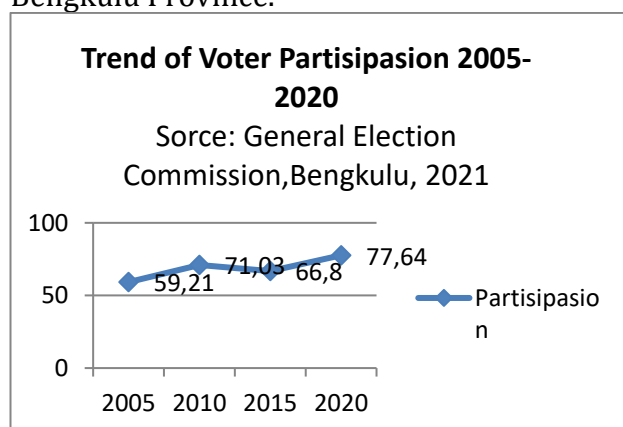
## Voter Participation Trends

Compared to the voter participation rate in the other regional head election (*Pilkada*) since 2005, the voter participation rate in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor election was an distinction achievement because it is the highest voter participation. In fact, the rate of increase compared to the previous *Pilkada* in 2015 reached 10.8%, an extraordinary increase considering that the 2020 simultaneous. The *Pilkada* were held when Bengkulu province was facing the Corona-19 pandemic which scared the public.

The voter participation rate for 2020 is the highest figure in all that Bengkulu province has held direct regional elections since 2005. Furthermore, this achievement was accompanied by the minimum number of violations committed by organizers, election participants and voters. Of course, this achievement must be maintained in the future and become a best practice for organizing *Pilkada* under normal circumstances. Of course this is not easy and if it is not examined in a comprehensive manner it could become a boom time threat to the commissioner's future performance. As stated by several sources, there are many factors that contribute to the high participation rate for the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor election, and the commissioner must examine them carefully and explain them comprehensively and honestly so that this valuable experience can be used as a reference for the organizing of regional elections in subsequent years.

Observing the trend of the development of voter participation in the Governor's election event, the figure shows quite sharp fluctuations in the range of 10 percent. This pattern of development shows that many factors are related to voter participation in using their political rights, coming and voting for the candidate of governor and vice governor election (see Graph 1). In general, the trend in the development of voter participation shows

an improvement, which means that people's awareness to exercise their political rights is getting better. Several informants confirmed that voter awareness in using political rights was relatively good when compared to the national average. The achievement of participation in the 2020 Governor Election was the highest achievement during the direct governor election in Bengkulu Province.



Grafik 2. Trend of Voter

### Analysis of High Participation

*Pilkada* experts in Indonesia expressed the opinion that there were several factors behind the differences in voter participation between regions, such as geography, weather, socio-economic conditions, culture, integrity of organizers, money politics, integrity and popularity of candidates (Diego Fossati, 2016, Usfinit et al, 2014). Furthermore, Dalton, (2006) explained related to participation theory as explained by what is known as the civic voluntarism model that there are three types that influence political participation in general elections, namely personal characteristics, group effects, and political attitudes.

Personal characteristics (personal characteristics) emphasize the social status held by an individual, for example level of education, occupation, wages and so on. In many political studies the level of education and employment status

influences the choice in general elections. Furthermore, the effect of the group (group effects) means that voter participation is influenced by ties and social interaction with the social group of which he is a part. Social closeness with certain groups or parties will encourage someone to tend to choose their reference group. Meanwhile, political attitudes have more to do with political values that are understood by a person towards a party or candidate participating in an election. Voters' dissatisfaction with the performance of the party or regional head candidate will affect their choices. (Dalton, 2006: 50-51).

### CONCLUSIONS

The results of exploring the problem of high voter participation in the 2020 Governor and Vice Governor elections and answering the research objectives as explained in the first chapter, it can be concluded that the issue of voter participation cannot be explained by just one determinant factor but there are several factors contributed to the high participation rate in the 2020 Bengkulu Governor and Vice Governor Elections. Some of these factors are transactional politics (money politics), the role of the media, the role of candidates, the role of organizers and the pattern of campaign visits to places determined by the General Election Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum-KPU).

### BIBLIOGRAFI

- Bimber, Bruce and Homero G.Z, 2022, "Social Influence and Political Participation Around the World", *Europen Political Science Review*, 14(2), 135-154.
- BPS, 2022, Provinsi Bengkulu Dalam Angka, Bengkulu.
- Dalton, R.J. 2006. Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial

- Democracies, Fourth Edition, *CQ Press, Washington D.C.*(10-15).
- Diego Fossati, 2016. *The State of Local Politics in Indonesia: Survey Evidence from three cities, ISEA*
- Huntingto, Samuel, P and Joan M. Nelson, 2015, "No Easy Choice" *Participation in Developing Countries (Partisipasi Politik di Negara Berkembang), Rineka Cipta, Jakarta.*
- Kompas.com, 2020, "Pertaruhan Kualitas Pilkada 2020 di Masa Pandemi", Jumat, 25 Juni. No.5, Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore.
- KPU Provinsi Bengkulu, 2021. "Partisipasi Pilkada Bengkulu Tertinggi kedua Nasional", Antara News, Minggu 21 February, 2021.
- Rahman,A, 2007, *Sistem Politik Indonesia, Graha Ilmu, Yogyakarta*
- Spinelli, A and Luke Bucher, 2022, "Managing Elections During Covid-19: The Republic of Korea's First Crucial Test", *Economic and Social Research Council, UK.*
- Vyrost, Jozef, 2019, "Social and Psychological Factors of Political Participation according to Recent European Social Survey Data", *Intersections 5(3), pp. (116-130).*
- Tirto.Id, 2020, "Riwayat Kasus Corona di Indonesia, dari Maret hingga September 2020", 11 September.
- Usfinit, Y, Agung S, Dody S, 2014. *Perspektif Partisipasi Masyarakat pada Pemilihan Kepala Daerah (PILKADA) Kota Malang, Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik (JISIP), Vol 3, No. 1, pg. 38-45.*